

**Date:** January 14, 2016  
**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Fred Evander, Senior Long Range Planner  
**RE:** Revisions to the Housing Element  
**Attachments:** Draft Housing Element (12 Pages)

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The purpose of this staff report is to introduce a draft revision to the Housing Element of the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan.

## **ISSUE**

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update, Lewis County is required to amend the Housing Element of its Comprehensive Plan. This amendment is typically one of the simpler chapters of the update and is required to consider the following four items. A note of where these items are addressed within the draft is included after the description of each of the items.

1. The document is required to include an inventory of existing housing units and an analysis of the number (and type) of housing units necessary to provide for the projected growth over the planning period. This inventory of existing housing types and units is included within the data portions of the document, as well as on the map. No analysis of the number and type of housing units is included, as that analysis is dependent on the County-wide population allocation, which will be recommended by the Planned Growth Committee later this year.
2. The Housing Element is required to include goals, policies, and objectives for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. Goals, policies and objects for the development and improvement of housing are included on pages 7 to 10 of the document.
3. The document is required to identify sufficient land for housing, including but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, group homes, and foster care facilities. The housing appendix on the last page of the document includes this analysis and recommends changes that are necessary to accommodate each of these housing types.
4. The element is required to include provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. Housing policies for each segment of the community are included on pages 7 to 10.

## **PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF CHANGES**

As written, the proposed draft is meant to simplify the current Housing Element, and include three main sections – a data analysis (pages 1 to 6), a list of goals and policies (pages 7 to 10), and a housing appendix (page 11) – to address the four items required under the Growth Management Act.

The goals and policies section, as written, is based entirely on the existing Comprehensive Plan, though policies have been reorganized to better group similar thoughts, and the goals have been rewritten. All proposed additions are underlined, and proposed deletions are struck through.

## **DRAFT REVISIONS TO THE HOUSING ELEMENT**

A list of potential items to consider adding to the goals and policies section are also included on page 9.

### **COMPARISON TO EXISTING ELEMENT**

The existing Housing Element, originally adopted in 2008, addresses many of the same requirements of the Growth Management Act, but also features a description of housing resources, funding and housing programs. The proposed revisions to the element would remove much of this narrative material, which is not explicitly required under state law, to avoid creating a detailed written analysis that discusses these and other specific issues (to see the complete current narrative, please see pages 5-4 to 5-12 of the existing Housing Element). Narrative sections included within the document have no policy implications.

Staff proposes that future policy direction for the County be solely articulated through the Goals and Policies, and if possible be supported with data (in the data analysis portion of the document). In pursuing this approach, staff seeks to simplify the document, and promote additional readability for residents.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission consider the document, comparing it with the existing Housing Element, and provide direction about the draft as written. The Planning Commission will discuss the document at its meeting of January 26, 2016. Additional outreach about the draft will occur after the meeting.